

# CHAPTER 1

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## Introduction

This Environmental Impact Report (EIR) evaluates the potential environmental effects that could result from the proposed development and operation of a mixed-use retail and housing complex that includes approximately 170,000 square feet of retail space and 425 residential units. The 10.9-acre development parcel is located at the southwest corner of Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) and Second Street (site of the existing Seaport Marina Hotel) in the City of Long Beach (City).

The City, as the Lead Agency, has the authority to prepare this EIR and, after the public comment/response process, certify the Final EIR, and approve, as appropriate, the proposed project. The City and responsible agencies have the authority to make decisions on discretionary actions relating to the development of the proposed project.

This EIR is intended to serve as an informational document for interested parties and to be considered by the City and the responsible agencies during deliberations on the proposed project. The project approvals associated with the proposed project are described in Chapter 2, Project Description.

An Initial Study indicated that the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment and that an EIR would be required to evaluate potential adverse environmental impacts that could result from development of the project. As a result, this EIR has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the *CEQA Guidelines*. This EIR also complies with the procedures established by the City for the implementation of CEQA.

Questions regarding the preparation of this document and the City review of the proposed project should be referred to the following:

City of Long Beach  
Department of Planning and Building  
333 West Ocean Boulevard, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Long Beach, California 90802  
Attention: Ms. Angela Reynolds, Planning Officer  
Telephone: 562.570.6357  
Email: Angela\_Reynolds@longbeach.gov

## **A. History and Evolution of the Proposed Project**

Seaport Marina, LLC submitted an application for Conceptual Site Plan Review to the City in the Spring of 2005. The proposed project was assigned to a Zoning Planner who, as part of the review process, submitted the project to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC is an opportunity for the applicant to receive early feedback from the City regarding a proposed project. Representatives from various City departments meet with the applicant in an informal setting and identify and discuss potential issues related to the design and construction of the project.

The TAC reviewed the conceptual site plan for the proposed project at its August 10, 2005, meeting and submitted written comments to the applicant. Comments on the conceptual site plan were provided by the Department of Community Development, Department of Public Works, Long Beach Fire Department (LBFD), Long Beach Police Department (LBPD), Department of Building and Safety, and Long Beach Transit.

The applicant submitted a revised Conceptual Site Plan in February 2006. The resubmittal addressed comments received at the TAC meeting. The applicant submitted a complete development application for the proposed project in June 2006.

## **B. Purpose and Type of EIR/Intended Uses of the EIR**

In accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15121(a) the purpose of an EIR is to serve as an informational document that will generally inform public agency decision makers and the public of the potentially significant environmental effects of a project, and identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects. The EIR also includes consideration of a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed project; (1) No Project; (2) Retail Alternative; (3) Reduced Alternative; (4) Hotel/Retail Alternative; and (5) Utility Relocation Alternative.

This Project EIR is consistent with Section 15161 of the *CEQA Guidelines* that states that this type of EIR should primarily focus on the changes in the environment that would result from transition of the project site from its current condition to develop and operate the proposed mixed-use project. Therefore, this EIR examines all phases of the proposed project including site preparation, construction, and ongoing operation of the proposed project.

Pursuant to Section 15105 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, this EIR will be circulated for public review for a period of 45 days, beginning August 11, 2006, and ending September 25, 2006.

Copies of this EIR have been provided to interested agencies and the public. The document is also available on the City's website:

[www.longbeach.gov/plan/pb/epd/er.asp](http://www.longbeach.gov/plan/pb/epd/er.asp).

## C. Notice of Preparation and Areas of Controversy

On May 13, 2005, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the proposed project was distributed by the City of Long Beach to the State Clearinghouse, interested agencies and the public. The State Clearinghouse issued a project number for the EIR (SCH No. 2005051096). The NOP was circulated for comments between May 16, 2005 and June 15, 2005. A copy of the NOP and comments received on the NOP are included in Appendix A of this document. Responses to the NOP were received from the following agencies:

- Long Beach Fire Department (LBFD)
- Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (LACSD)
- Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)
- California Department of Health Services (DHS)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)
- South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)
- City of Seal Beach

Comments were also received from the public and are included in Appendix A.

A public scoping meeting was held on May 25, 2005, to seek public input regarding the environmental issues raised by the proposed project. Several members of the public raised questions regarding potentially significant environmental impacts. Key environmental concerns raised by the community included: (1) potential cumulative effects of traffic impacts on Interstate 405 (I-405), Second Street, Seventh Street, Studebaker Road, and at the County line; (2) adequacy of sewer connections; (3) potential air quality impacts; (4) proper identification of historic/cultural resources; and (5) potential aesthetic impacts related to the proposed project's consistency with the area's character and scale of surrounding buildings. Meeting notes are also included in Appendix A of this document.

The EIR addresses each of these areas of concern or controversy in detail; examines project-related and cumulative environmental impacts; identifies significant adverse environmental impacts; proposes mitigation measures designed to reduce or eliminate potentially significant impacts; and, finally, identifies residual impacts after mitigation are identified.

## D. Effects Found Not to be Significant

As required by the *CEQA Guidelines* (Section 15143), an EIR should focus on effects of the proposed project determined to be significant. The Initial Study (see Appendix A) identified issues that could be significantly impacted by the project. These issues are addressed in this EIR; they include: aesthetics; air quality; cultural resources; geology

and soils; hazards; hydrology, water quality and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES); land use; noise; population and housing; public services and utilities; recreation; and transportation and circulation. The following issues were determined in the Initial Study not to be significant and are not addressed in the EIR:

- agricultural resources
- mineral resources

The Initial Study also determined that biological issues would be less than significant. However, subsequent to distribution of the Initial Study, migratory birds were seen within the Alamitos Bay Marina in the vicinity of the project site. Therefore, this document includes a discussion of potential impacts to migratory birds in Chapter 3 in Section 3M. For further information on these issues, see the Initial Study in Appendix A of this document.

## **E. Format of the EIR**

This EIR is organized into seven sections, each dealing with a separate aspect of the required content of an EIR as described in the *CEQA Guidelines*; it is intended for use and reference. To help the reader locate information of particular interest, a brief summary of the contents of each section of the EIR is provided. The following sections are included the EIR:

Summary: This section contains an overview of the scope of the EIR, as well as a summary of environmental impacts, proposed mitigation, level of significance after mitigation, and unavoidable impacts. Also contained within this section is a summary description of project alternatives and potential growth-inducing impacts.

Chapter 1. Introduction: This chapter provides an overview of the purpose and use of the EIR, the environmental review process for the EIR and the proposed project, and the general format of the document.

Chapter 2. Project Description: This chapter defines the project location, summarizes the components of the proposed project, and outlines the project objectives and the need for the proposed project. This chapter also includes a description of related projects that are considered in the cumulative analysis in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3. Environmental Setting, Impacts and Mitigation Measures: This chapter describes and evaluates the environmental issue areas, including the existing environmental setting and background, applicable environmental thresholds, environmental impacts (both short-term and long-term), policy considerations related to the particular environmental issue area under analysis, mitigation measures capable of minimizing environmental harm, and a discussion of cumulative impacts. Where additional actions must be taken to ensure consistency with environmental policies,

recommendations are made. By consolidating environmental impact assessment and site-specific policy directives within each impact area, clear linkages between impact assessment and related policy consistency can be established.

Chapter 4. Alternatives: This chapter analyzes feasible alternatives to the proposed project, including the No Project Alternative, Retail Alternative, Reduced Project Alternative, Hotel/Retail Alternative, and the Utility Relocation Alternative.

Chapter 5. Other CEQA Considerations: This chapter provides a summary of the proposed project's potential growth-inducing impacts; provides a list of proposed project impacts that are significant and unavoidable by issue area; discusses the environmental effects of the proposed project found not to be significant; and identifies any irreversible changes to the natural environment resulting from the proposed project.

Chapter 6. Report Preparation: This chapter identifies the public and private agencies and individuals contacted during the preparation of this report, and all individuals responsible for the preparation of this report.

Chapters 7. References: Chapter 7 includes the references cited in the report.

Appendices: Data supporting the analysis or contents of this EIR are provided in the appendices to the document. Other reports are available at the City of Long Beach Department of Planning and Building, located at 333 West Ocean Boulevard, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Long Beach, California 90802.

## **F. Incorporation by Reference**

As permitted in Section 15150 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, this EIR references several technical studies, analyses, and reports. Information from the documents that are incorporated by reference is briefly summarized in the appropriate section(s) of this EIR along with a description of how the public may obtain and review these documents, including: cultural resources archival records search; geotechnical investigation report; Phase I Environmental Assessment; remedial action plan; and hydrology and hydraulics analysis.